

Amendment and Response

Applicant: Ivan H. Bekkers

Serial No.: 10/624,054

Filed: July 21, 2003

Docket No.: O320.101.102

Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MANAGING FLIGHT INFORMATION

REMARKS

The following remarks are made in response to the Office Action mailed February 28, 2005. Claims 1-32 were rejected. With this Response, claims 6, 15, 19, 25, and 27-29 have been amended. Claims 9 and 10 have been cancelled, and claim 33 has been added. Therefore, claims 1-8 and 11-33 are currently pending in the application and are presented for reconsideration and allowance.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 19-23 and 25-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. In particular, the Examiner cited the methods recited in the claims as an attempt to patent an abstract idea rather than a “tangible” process. In response, Applicant has amended independent claims 19 and 25 to recited a process performed by a computerized flight information management system. The computerized flight information management system of claim 19 includes a collector and a translator, and the computerized flight information management system of claim 25 includes a database, a storage system, a file generator, and a data distributor. The express implementation of the methods of claim 19 and 25 in a computerized flight information management system grounds each of the claims as being performed on a distinguishable apparatus. As a result, the claimed methods are “tangible” and do not represent abstract ideas.

Consequently, independent claims 19 and 25 are believed to recite statutory subject matter. Applicant respectfully submits that the above rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 101 should be withdrawn for amended, independent claims 19 and 25.

Dependent claims 21-23 and 26-31 respectively depend from independent claims 19 and 25, which as described above are believed to recite statutory subject matter. As such, dependent claims 21-23 and 26-31 serve to further define the statutory subject matter of the independent claims. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the above rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 101 should be withdrawn for claims 21-23 and 26-31.

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Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,836,537 (Zirngibl). Applicant submits that one skilled in the art could not apply the teachings of Zirngibl to arrive at the inventions recited in claims 1-5.

In particular, independent claim 1 relates to a flight information management system including a collection system and a distribution system. The collection system includes a collector and a translator. The collector is for receiving flight information messages in a plurality of formats. The translator is for converting the flight information messages in the plurality of formats into a common format. Zirngibl fails to teach or otherwise suggest these limitations.

Zirngibl relates to a system and method for real-time interactive voice services for information related to an existing travel schedule. The reference specifically deals with the notification of subscribed individuals to travel schedule changes, such as cancelled flights, overbooked car rental agencies, etc. Zirngibl describes that the notifications are based on information databases includes airline schedules, etc., but Zirngibl fails to disclose any details regarding how such databases are constructed. The Examiner cites C7, L41-48, C9 L51-58, C10 L54-67 as supporting a conclusion that Zirngibl teaches receiving travel information from a wide variety of sources. However, those variety of sources each relate to a different type of travel information, such as flight information, hotel information, event/ticket information, etc. Zirngibl does not teach receiving the flight information from multiple sources or in multiple formats as averred by the Examiner.

Moreover, since Zirngibl does not receive flight information from multiple sources and makes no mention of receiving such information in multiple formats, it would not be obvious to one skilled in the art to include a collector for receiving the flight information in a plurality of formats or a translator for translating such information into a single format as recited in independent claim 1.

Accordingly, it would not be obvious to one skilled in the art to arrive at the invention of independent claim 1 based on Zirngibl. Therefore, allowance of independent claim 1 is respectfully requested.

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Dependent claims 2-5 depend directly or indirectly upon independent claim 1. Accordingly, dependent claims 2-5 are also allowable over the art of record.

Claims 6-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zirngibl. Claims 9 and 10 have been cancelled. Applicant submits that one skilled in the art could not apply the teachings of Zirngibl to arrive at the inventions recited in claims 6-8 and 11-14.

In particular, amended, independent claim 6 relates to a collection system for collecting flight information from a plurality of suppliers including a collector, a translator, and an authentication system. The collector is for receiving flight information messages in a plurality of formats. The translator is for converting the flight information messages in the plurality of formats into a common format. The authentication system is for verifying flight information received by the collector was received from a valid supplier based upon a supplier profile. The supplier profile designates at least one acceptable format of flight information messages received from a corresponding supplier. Zirngibl fails to teach or otherwise suggest these limitations.

As described with respect to independent claim 1, Zirngibl fails to teach or otherwise suggest a collector or a translator as recited in independent claim 6. Accordingly, independent claim 6 is believed to be allowable over the cited reference. Additionally, since Zirngibl fails to disclose any particulars about generation of the travel databases used to generate the voice notifications, namely how the information is gathered to form such databases, it also fails to disclose an authentication system for verifying that the information was received from a valid supplier. In fact, not only does Zirngibl fail to mention how flight information is collected, but it also fails to disclose the creation of a supplier profile or to even suggest a need or motivation to create such a profile. Therefore, Zirngibl fails to disclose any authentication of flight information messages, nevertheless the specific authentication system recited in amended, independent claim 6.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, it would not be obvious to one skilled in the art to arrive at the invention of amended, independent claim 6 based on Zirngibl. Therefore, allowance of independent claim 6 is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 7, 8, 11-14 depend directly or indirectly upon independent claim 1. Accordingly, dependent claims 7, 8, 11-14 are also allowable over the art of record.

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Claims 15-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Zirngibl. Applicant submits that the Zirngibl reference fails to disclose the invention of claims 15-18.

In particular, amended, independent claim 15 relates to a distribution system including a plurality of customer profiles, a file generator, and a data distributor. Each customer profile stores a list of flight information requested by one of the plurality of consumers and specifying a file format for receiving notification files from the distribution system. The file generator generates a notification file of flight information for each of the plurality of customers based on the corresponding customer profile, wherein each notification file is generated in the file format specified in the customer profile corresponding to each of the plurality of customers. The data distributor selectively sends the notification files to the customers. Zirngibl fails to teach these limitations.

Rather, Zirngibl only describes distributing notification files to customers as a voice or audible file. In fact, the entire Zirngibl reference is centered around a voice service and the call structure of that voice service. Although the voice notification files can be accessed by a customer with a land-line telephone, a mobile phone, pager, etc., the file is always expressed to the customer as a sound wave. Notably, Zirngibl describes the host system as receiving feedback or other transaction request from the customer in different formats (C26, L 51-67). However, that disclosure does not alter the sound wave format of the notification message initially sent to the customer. Therefore, Zirngibl fails to teach or otherwise suggest generation of notification files in the file format corresponding to a specific file format included in the customer profile. In fact, there is no need to specify a file format in the personal information database of Zirngibl since all notification messages are sent in the same sound wave format.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, it would not be obvious to one skilled in the art to arrive at the invention of amended, independent claim 15 based on Zirngibl. Therefore, allowance of independent claim 15 is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 16-18 depend directly or indirectly upon independent claim 1. Accordingly, dependent claims 16-18 are also allowable over the art of record.

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Claims 19-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zirngibl. Applicant submits that one skilled in the art could not apply the teachings of Zirngibl to arrive at the inventions recited in claims 19-24.

Independent claim 19 relates to a method of collecting flight information from a plurality of suppliers including receiving and translating flight information messages. Receiving flight information messages includes receiving messages in a plurality of formats and from a plurality of suppliers including at least two of an airline, a global distribution system, an air traffic control system, and a schedule mainframe. Translating the flight information messages translates the multiple format messages into common format messages. Zirngibl fails to teach or otherwise suggest such limitations.

As described with respect to independent claim 1, Zirngibl does not teach or suggest receiving flight information messages from a plurality of suppliers or translating such messages into a common format. Moreover, since Zirngibl does not teach or suggest receiving flight information messages from a plurality of suppliers, it inherently does not teach or suggest the plurality of suppliers including at least two of an airline, a global distribution system, an air traffic control system, and a schedule mainframe as recited in amended, independent claim 19.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, it would not be obvious to one skilled in the art to arrive at the invention of amended, independent claim 19 based on Zirngibl. Therefore, allowance of amended, independent claim 19 is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 20-24 depend directly or indirectly upon independent claim 19. Accordingly, dependent claims 20-24 are also allowable over the art of record.

Claims 25-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Zirngibl. Applicant submits that the Zirngibl reference fails to disclose the invention of claim 25-28.

Amended, independent claim 25 relates to a method of distributing flight information to a plurality of customers and is believed to be allowable over the cited references for similar reasons as described with respect to amended, independent claim 15. Specifically, Zirngibl fails to describe a file format being specified in a customer profile and generating notification files in specified file formats. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, it would not be obvious to one

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skilled in the art to arrive at the invention of amended, independent claim 25 based on Zirngibl.

Therefore, allowance of amended, independent claim 25 is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 26-28 depend directly or indirectly upon independent claim 25.

Accordingly, dependent claims 26-28 are also allowable over the art of record.

Claims 29-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zirngibl et al. Applicant submits that one skilled in the art could not apply the teachings of Zirngibl to arrive at the inventions recited in claims 29-31.

Amended, independent claim 29 provides a business method for providing flight information to a customer. The method includes defining a customer profile including a financial model and a list of flight information requested by the customer, receiving flight information in a plurality of formats from a plurality of suppliers, translating the flight information received to a common format, discarding duplicative flight information received from the plurality of suppliers, distributing translated flight information, tracking the flight information distributed, and billing the customer. Zirngibl fails to teach or otherwise suggest such limitations.

For similar reasons as described with respect to independent claim 1, Zirngibl fails to teach receiving flight information from a plurality of suppliers in a plurality of formats or translating the flight information into a common format. Moreover, since Zirngibl does not receive flight information from multiple suppliers it does not describe or otherwise allude to receiving duplicative flight information. Therefore, Zirngibl does not teach or otherwise suggest discarding duplicative flight information received from the plurality of suppliers as recited in amended, independent claim 29.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, it would not be obvious to one skilled in the art to arrive at the invention of amended, independent claim 29 based on Zirngibl. Therefore, allowance of amended, independent claim 29 is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 30 and 31 depend directly or indirectly upon independent claim 19. Accordingly, dependent claims 30 and 31 are also allowable over the art of record.

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Claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zirngibl et al. Applicant submits that one skilled in the art could not apply the teachings of Zirngibl to arrive at the invention recited in claim 32.

Amended, independent claim 32 provides a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing a method for collecting flight information. The method includes receiving flight information in a plurality of formats from a plurality of suppliers including at least two of an airline, a global distribution system, an air traffic control system, and a schedule mainframe, translating the flight information received in the plurality of formats to a common format, and storing the flight information in the common format to a data storage system. Zirngibl fails to teach or otherwise suggest such limitations.

For similar reasons as described with respect to independent claim 1, Zirngibl fails to teach receiving flight information from a plurality of suppliers in a plurality of formats or translating the flight information into a common format. Therefore, it fails to teach or otherwise suggest a computer-readable medium with instruction to perform such steps. Moreover, for similar reasons as described with respect to independent claim 19, since Zirngibl does not teach or suggest receiving flight information messages from a plurality of suppliers, it inherently does not teach or suggest the plurality of suppliers including at least two of an airline, a global distribution system, an air traffic control system, and a schedule mainframe as recited in amended, independent claim 32.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, it would not be obvious to one skilled in the art to arrive at the invention of amended, independent claim 32 based on Zirngibl. Therefore, allowance of amended, independent claim 32 is respectfully requested.

Added Claim

Applicant has added claim 33, which is directed to a flight information system. Applicant believes added claim 33 to be allowable over the art of record.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that pending claims 1-8 and 11-33 are in form for allowance and are not taught or suggested by the cited references. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of claims 1-8 and 11-33 is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's representative at the below-listed telephone numbers to facilitate prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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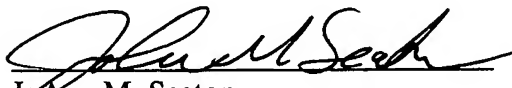
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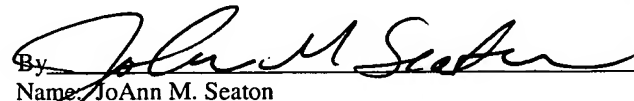
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By 
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